



DATE: September 18, 2017

TO: Mayor Stokes and City Councilmembers

FROM: Mark Manuel, Diversity Outreach and Engagement Administrator, City Manager's Office

SUBJECT: Welcoming Week

From September 15-24 Bellevue, along with other Eastside cities, non-profit partners, faith organizations and community groups will be hosting a variety of activities in honor of "Welcoming Week." The annual series of events, now in its 2nd year on the Eastside, reinforces the inclusive environment Bellevue is known for. Further, it recognizes the importance of engaging immigrants, refugees and longtime residents.

In 2017, the City of Bellevue officially became a member of the national Welcoming America network. Welcoming America is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that supports local cross-sector efforts of organizations dedicated to ensuring a welcoming environment for new and longtime residents. As an official partner, Bellevue is able to benefit from a national network dedicated to community building and training and educational resources.

Strong municipalities in the 21st century deliberately work to connect residents from different backgrounds to leverage the advantages diversity brings. In 2014, the City Council adopted the vision statement: "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past" Since then, Bellevue has led a strategic effort to work in partnership with residents through a number of initiatives including the Diversity Advantage Plan. In 2015, as you know, Bellevue became the largest city in Washington state to have a majority population of people of color.

Welcoming Week is a prime opportunity to collaborate with our Eastside partners and advance the city's goals. With over twenty events being held in the area alone, we reinforce our commitment to inclusion and the City Council Vision. Free events are open to all and include resource fairs, dance parties, community dialogues, art events, cultural celebrations and more..

Attachments:

- A. Proclamation
- B. 2017 Eastside Welcoming Week Events